

# News from Ed Markey

**United States Congress**

**Massachusetts Seventh District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MARKEY PROPOSES LEGISLATION TO PROTECT WHISTLEBLOWERS**

***Rep. Markey: ‘these modern day Paul Reveres deserve legal  
protection’***

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a senior Democratic Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, today announced he would introduce comprehensive legislation to provide all federal employees, contractors and private sector workers who report homeland or national security flaws, threats to public health and safety, violations of laws or regulations, or waste, fraud and mismanagement with vastly improved whistleblower protections. An amendment version of this legislation, which failed on a party-line vote at yesterday’s markup of the Homeland Security Authorization Act, would extend the whistleblower protections provided by Congress (in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act) to corporate employees reporting accounting fraud to the rest of the federal and private sector workforce.

“It is preposterous that Congress, in the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, gave better whistleblower protections to employees of Enron or WorldCom who report accounting fraud than it gives to FBI employees, TSA baggage screeners, or nuclear reactor security guards who report serious risks to homeland and national security!” said Rep. Markey.

“While Congress has provided whistleblower rights to those who protect shareholders, it has failed miserably to provide whistleblower rights to workers who protect 280 million American citizens. Instead, these modern day Paul Reveres who do the right thing and report homeland and national security flaws get fired. They are blackballed from getting other jobs. They go broke. Their lives are ruined.”

“It seems to me that extending legal protection to these whistleblowers is the least we can do to protect those who risk their livelihoods to protect us.”

The legislation Rep. Markey will introduce was developed in collaboration with Sibel Edmonds, a former FBI contractor and whistleblower who has created a group of more

than 50 national and homeland security whistleblowers, and other national whistleblower advocacy groups.

The new legislation would give any federal employee, federal contractor or subcontractor, or a corporate employee protection from retaliation when reporting a concern about national or homeland security, threat to public health and safety, or fraud, waste or mismanagement to their employer, GAO, a government Agency or Congress. If the Department of Labor fails to act on their case within 6 months, they would have the right to bring a case in civil court, and if successful, be entitled to compensatory and punitive damages. It would make the act of retaliating against a whistleblower a crime punishable by up to 10 years in jail, and would ensure that if the Government claimed its State Secrets privilege thus preventing the merits of the case from being heard, that the whistleblower would automatically win their case.

For more on Representative Markey's work to protect whistleblowers and improve homeland security check out: <http://www.house.gov/markey/>